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Sino-Japanese war

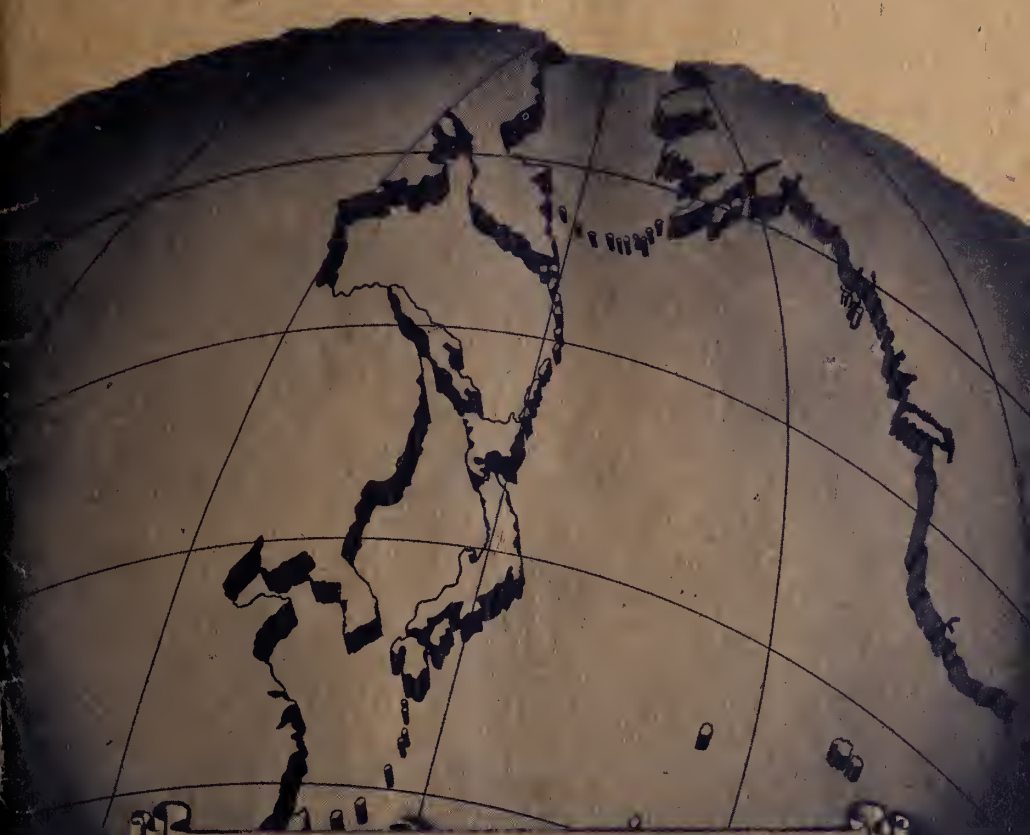
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FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

MARCH, 1939

15 CENTS

Monthly



**BEHIND THE CONFLICT
IN ASIA**

Far EASTERN AFFAIRS *Monthly*



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DAVID WARREN RYDER, *Editor and Publisher*

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March, 1939

No. 1

Notes and Comment

In a recent issue of the *National Review* (London), Willard Price, the well-known writer on Oriental affairs, discusses the plight of China. "It is estimated," he says, "that during the last 60 years, due to wars, famines and floods, more Chinese have died than the entire present population of China."

Since 85 per cent of the Chinese are farmers, it is with the Chinese farmer that Mr. Price especially deals. One of the farmer's worst enemies is floods; floods which occur because of the lack of trees, and each year destroy thousands of acres of farm lands. China needs—badly—a sound national reforestation programme.

Roads

Another need, he points out, is roads. He writes: "The cost of transporting goods fifty miles through back-country China is often more than the cost of the goods. Coastal cities import large quantities of foodstuffs from abroad; it is cheaper to bring them from England and America than from interior China. The curious fact is that the chief reason the farmer does not have roads is because he does not want them. They would make bandit attacks too easy. They would steal from

his land, for every foot of territory must pay a land tax; therefore every farmer whose land is crossed by a road, far from maintaining it, loses no opportunity to plough it up and shift the traffic to his neighbor's property."

War

The last straw, Price says, is war. "Counting all armies and organized bandits there are about three million men under arms, ten times the armed force of Japan. Marauding troops may at any time destroy everything the farmer owns and burn his village. If other soldiers come in time to 'defend' him, he may suffer just as much from them. They may move into his house, eat his food, use his wife and daughters as they please, and carry away everything of value when they go. Between waves of war there are always bandits. In fact, discharged soldiers may turn bandit by the thousands and move through the country like an army. . . .

Bandits

"Bandits operate in groups of from two or three men to several thousand. The farmer sleeping out in his fields under a rough straw roof with gong and gun beside him may ward off the few. But if a large contingent arrives, the village head man must bargain with them, try to raise a sufficient bribe to satisfy them. At some village gates signs have been posted such as 'Everything has been taken,' or 'This village has been looted ten times'." Comment upon this would seem superfluous.

Dr. Koo Reported Seeking Peace

A recent Shanghai dispatch says that Dr. Wellington Koo, Chinese Ambassador to France, sent from Paris a letter to Wang Ching-wei at Hanoi, endorsing the recent peace proposals of Wang, who, it will be remembered, up to the

time of making these proposals, was prime minister in the Chiang Kai-shek regime and high in the councils of the Kuomintang. According to the same dispatch Dr. Koo also recommended direct negotiations between China and Japan, and was disappointed when the Kuomintang rejected his recommendation.

Chamberlain's Views

Writing in the *Christian Science Monitor* of March 10, the veteran correspondent, William Henry Chamberlain, warns against "diplomatic or journalistic omniscience" in dealing with Far Eastern affairs. Says he: "The shrewdest diplomatic reports that are filed from the Far East are not couched in slambang, cocksure uncompromising terms. Any diplomat with a genuine feel for the psychology of this part of the world does not fail to make allowance for the unexpected and the unpredictable; for the Orient's capacity, strange to the Western mind, of drawing rabbits of compromise and agreement out of the most unpromising looking hats."

Japan Not Fascist State

Mr. Chamberlain applies these observations in refuting the allegations of "fascist" that have been made against Japan. "It is always simplest and most satisfactory," he writes, "to explain politics in terms of personalities with big labels pinned on them. But this method, when applied to Japan, can only lead to disastrous results, because Japan is governed not by any single individual, not even by a readily defined group of individuals, but by what might be called 'the sense of the meeting'."

In Chamberlain's opinion, "Actually there is little to suggest the European fascist about the septuagenarian conservative Hiranuma (the new Premier)." And he believes that

there will be "no tinkering, at least in the immediate future, with the Constitution and the established political parties" in Japan.

Peace Proposals

What Mr. Chamberlain refers to as "drawing rabbits of compromise and agreements out of the most unpromising looking hats," makes Wang Ching-wei's recent peace proposals take on more significance, and warrants the assumption that the persisting reports that Wu Pei-fu will soon emerge from retirement to form a new government in China have some basis in fact.

More Communist Activity

In its issue of March 16, "The Foreign Observer" (New York) devotes considerable space to what it calls the "Chinese Puzzle," and declares that "Moscow is contemplating the establishing of a strong, Communist dictatorship over a Sovietized China.

"Russia's anxiety over the Chinese question is said to be caused by the imminent fear of the collapse of the Chiang Kai-shek regime, and Moscow wants to be prepared to establish quickly a defensive regime against the Japanese encroachment into Western China. Looking forward to a revision in her Chinese policy, following the recent organization of the National Defense Council to promote a stronger alliance between Communists and the radical-minded Kuomintang officials for a more active anti-Japanism, Moscow last month recalled Ivan Kuganetz Orelsky, Soviet Ambassador to Chungking, to make a first-report. Also recalled were the Soviet Consul in Shanghai and the head of the *Tass* news agency, who were expected to report to the Communist Party Congress at Moscow on the best tactics to be used in the Far East. According to Shanghai dispatches on February 21:

Communist Dictatorship

"In the event of the complete collapse of the Chiang regime, the National (Chiang) Government would be reorganized into a national defense government under Communist dictatorship. The Chinese Red Army, now stationed mostly in northwestern China, would jump to the front lines to consolidate and strengthen the Central army and the regional force affiliated with it, all under Communist direction. . . . In this way, Moscow hopes somehow to turn to its own advantage the changes being brought about by the continued advance of the Japanese and the impending collapse of Chiang."

In further paragraphs devoted to the same topic, under the heading, "Counter Moves," the *Foreign Observer* declares:

"Torn between Tokyo and Moscow, the Chinese have been giving increased evidence that, if they must have puppet governments, they prefer to be 'Manchukuanized' by Tokyo rather than Sovietized under Moscow. More than 100,000 Chinese in the Wuhan cities—Hankow, Wuchang and Han-yang—held mass meetings late last month at which anti-Comintern and anti-Chang Kai-shek resolutions were adopted. Similar meetings have been held at Peking, Nanking and Tientsin.

"At the same time, it is reported from Kaifeng—which Marshal Wu Pei-fu has designated his headquarters for a China Pacification Commission—that at least 100,000 'National salvation' troops will be ready to take the field under Marshal Wu against Chiang early in April. At that time, also, Wu is expected to appeal to the Chinese military leaders in Szechwan, Sikang and Yunnan to throw in their lot with him and establish peace."

Behind The Conflict In Asia

San Francisco

March 21, 1939

My dear Doctor Woodbridge:

I greatly value your letter, and appreciate deeply the compliment implied in your request for a "more complete elucidation" of certain issues that have been raised by the existing conflict in East Asia. No less do I esteem those portions of your letter in which you question the validity of some of my contentions and argue ably for their modification. No sane man can ever aspire to be always right. Whoever pretends to infallibility is either a fool or a knave, and I hope that I fall into neither of those categories. Besides, good-tempered argument is a clarifying instrument. Put to the test of successfully defending a position against able attack, one must discard superficialities and "slogan thinking" and get down to fundamentals. And if one cannot successfully defend a position, the sooner he abandons it for one that can be so defended, the better. And so, for many reasons, I am glad you wrote me as you did.

You ask, first of all, if I will not agree that Communism and Fascism are essentially the same thing; and I answer that with one or two qualifications I will so agree. I would say, by way of qualification, that Fascism is simply the form which effective resistance to Communism takes. So far as I am aware, in no instance has Fascism manifested itself on any extensive scale until Communism has made such inroads as to threaten—or in the minds of many people to appear to threaten—the life of the existing order. Like you, I utterly abhor them both—neither of them has any place in our country—and I hope that however the great mass of our people may differ upon

other matters, they will unite as one man to prevent Communism or Fascism gaining any foothold here.

Believing, as I do, that Fascism is the reaction and the resistance to Communism, I think the best way to avoid Fascism is to prevent Communism gaining such a hold as to be—or to appear to be—a menace to our institutions. And I think that the best way to prevent Communism getting such a hold is, not to employ Communistic methods against it—i.e., suppression, violence, etc., etc.—but to show it up for what, stripped of all its gaudy pretense, it *really* is: a snare and a delusion; a piece of colossal folly; a fairy-story system of economics which, in the one country where it has had undisputed sway for over twenty years, has actually worsened the economic condition of the one class it purports to exist to aid—the workers. As you doubtless know, authoritative statistics, recently made public, show incontrovertibly that from the economic standpoint the Russian worker is worse off today, after twenty years of the “Workers’ Republic,” than he was under the late Tzars. As for his condition apart from economics; well, I don’t suppose that being exiled or starved to death or put in front of a firing squad is any pleasanter at the order of a “proletarian” dictator than at the hands of a Tzar.

If the facts of Communism’s debacle be made clear to our people, there will be little danger of Communism making formidable headway in this country; hence no likelihood of Fascism, for, as was pointed out earlier, Fascism comes only as an instrumentality to resist Communism or the serious threat of Communism.

Communism In China

You ask to what extent Communism had penetrated China, and wonder if, perchance, Japan may not have seized

upon it as a convenient means of justifying her campaign against the Chiang Kai-shek regime.

This is a question that will require some space to answer. The record of the Comintern's strenuous and persisting efforts to Communize China, beginning in the early twenties and continuing, without serious interruption, down to date, would fill a volume. For a considerably detailed and abundantly documented account of it I must refer you to a book called, "The Communist International," by F. Borkenau, a Russian, and former member of the Comintern, who gives a simple, objective and unheated account of the operations of this malodorous institution in China as well as in Europe. Suffice it to say here that the Communists gave Chiang Kai-shek his start: instructed him in military tactics; formulated his programme, and aided him with money and expert counsellors until he had succeeded to a point where he believed the pupil could cut loose from the master and go it alone. This he did in 1927; and for ten years thereafter he was, outwardly at least, Communism's bitter enemy. Then, as you know, in December, 1936, occurred his kidnapping in a coup planned by the Communists, from whom he purchased his life and liberty by his agreement to unite with them in a war against Japan.

At the time, this affair was surrounded by a good deal of typical Oriental mystery, and it was difficult to refute the denial of the Communists and their apologists that Chiang again had come under Communist control. Gradually, however, the facts have come out until now no one denies that this is the case. Little by little the non-Communist elements in the Kuomintang have been eliminated until now the Communists are in complete control of its policy, programme and tactics. Witness the "scorched earth" policy that Chiang has

been pursuing for the past year, a policy which the Communists not only admit but boast is their own, and the effect of which, on the Chinese people, according to the February issue of the *Living Age*, has been so brutally devastating as to make one wonder whether Chiang is fighting the Japanese or his own people.

Thus, I think there can be no question that Communism had made heavy inroads in China.

So far as Japan was concerned this was a two-fold threat. In the first place, a Communized China meant a China dominated, if not completely controlled, by Japan's traditional enemy, Russia, who, ever since 1905, has been biding its time for the propitious moment to seek to avenge its defeat by Japan. In the second place, Communism in China taught and fomented intense hatred of Japan. Thus, even though Russia failed to gain complete political mastery of China, through spreading Communism farther and farther it would make the Chinese people implacable enemies of Japan.

No informed and honest person now denies that the Communists employed these identical tactics in stirring up the Chinese against the British in 1925-26-27, and employed them so successfully that all China was swept by a wave of anti-British demonstrations and boycotts, culminating, finally, in the Nanking Outrage of March, 1927, in which British, American, Italian and Japanese nationals were wantonly killed by Chiang Kai-shek's soldiers, and in which the entire foreign population of Nanking was only saved from wholesale slaughter by British and American gunboats which arrived at the most critical juncture and began shelling the city.

So far as Great Britain was concerned, there was no justification for this wave of Chinese hatred. It was engendered by the Russian Communists who, at that time, were obeying

Lenin's mandate to "destroy capitalism in Europe by overthrowing it in the Orient."

Failing to gain its ends with respect to Great Britain, the Comintern turned the heat off of Britain and turned it on Japan, who, up to that time, had been pursuing a policy of appeasement toward China—to the extent, even, of declining to accept Britain's invitation to participate in the joint military demonstration against the Chinese forces at Nanking.

If you will read the unbiased history of the decade 1920-30, you will find abundant evidence that Japan's undeviating policy toward China during all of this period was to turn the other cheek—to do nothing which would justly engender, and everything which would allay, anti-Japanese sentiment amongst the Chinese.

And although it is one of those things which is unsusceptible of concrete proof, the belief that the Chinese people, uncontaminated by Communist influences, would have responded in kind, is one shared by most of the honest observers of Sino-Japanese affairs. However, the Communists were more than ever busy during this period, preaching hatred of the Japanese and assigning as fear and weakness the conciliatory policy and friendly advances of Japan.

So effective was this effort that by the Spring of 1937, as profound a friend of the Chinese as Nathaniel Pfeffer was moved to write in *Asia*:

"What needs most be said about China now is that the Chinese are very close to losing their balance. If they do not pull themselves up, they will repeat the mistake they made almost ten years ago, with the same disastrous consequences. In fact, it is difficult just now to say which China has more to fear: Japan or China, the ambitions of the Japanese army or the state of mind of the Chinese people. The latter, I am inclined to think. For it may

succeed in bringing on a war that is not easy to prevent in any case, but that could still be prevented. One has only to be here in China for forty-eight hours to be shocked by the recklessness with which not only students but mature and influential Chinese talk and think of war."

What Mr. Pfeffer did not add, but which he could have added with perfect verity, was that the Chinese were "close to losing their balance" because they had been whipped up to war fever by the Chinese Communist Party and the score or more of other Communist agencies at work in China—all taking orders from the Comintern in Moscow and carrying out the new policy adopted by the Seventh Comintern Congress in 1935. Remember that Dimitrov, speaking at this Congress, had said:

"In China, through the people's movement, a large area has been sovietized and strong forces of Red troops have been organized. But due to the predatory invasion of Japanese Imperialism and traitorous acts of the Nanking Government, the national existence of the Chinese race is in danger. At this time, Chinese Soviets alone are capable of becoming the rallying point for all anti-Imperialistic forces for waging war on the designs of Imperialistic powers to enslave or partition China, and thus for assisting Chinese in their race struggle. We therefore unanimously endorse the Chinese Communist Party's proposal to put up a unified anti-Imperialistic front of an immense scope against the Japanese and the Chinese traitors, by marshaling all the forces and organizations existing within China prepared to fight for the preservation of her land and the liberation of her people. We send our hearty and enthusiastic greetings to the heroic Chinese Red armies which have gone through the acid test of many battles, and we assure the Chinese people that we are fully determined to support them in their

struggle to deliver the Chinese nation from the clutches of all Imperialistic and predatory powers and their Chinese agents."

MOSCOW PREPARES CHINA FOR WAR ON JAPAN.

To canalize and effectuate this policy, the Seventh Comintern Congress adopted the following resolution:

"In China, the expansion of Soviet movements and entrenchment of the Red armies must be coordinated into a unified programme as a nation-wide people's movement against Imperialism. This movement would best be conducted by using as its slogan the idea that it is a war on Imperialistic oppression, especially Japanese Imperialism and its Chinese agents. The Soviet should be made the rallying point for the entire Chinese people in their fight for liberation. Proletarians in Imperialistic countries must extend support to the peoples in colonies and semi-colonies in their war on Imperialistic invaders."

This was in August, 1935. The effects of the resolution began to appear a few months afterwards in an intensification of the anti-Japanese campaign. Soviet agents in the Peking-Tientsin area issued instructions to the Chinese Communist Party for the carrying on in this region of what they called an "exposure campaign." Students were mobilized and sent on lecturing trips throughout the rural districts to arouse the farming population against "Japanese Imperialism." The students were instructed to tell the rural population that all Japanese goods in North China were smuggled goods, and, furthermore, that the Nanking Government was preparing to punish buyers of Japanese goods.

I hope and believe this answers your question as to how far Communism had gone in China, and as to whether Japan

had, from her standpoint, reasonable cause to fear and oppose Communism there.

Do Chinese People Want Communism?

Further along, you state, not as a confirmed conviction, I take it, but more as a subject for speculation and consideration, the question of whether the Chinese people, if they want Communism, should not have it.

My answer to that is to say that if the Chinese people were the American people, and decided, after weighing all the facts, that they wanted Communism, they probably should have it. But we must not make the mistake, so common, it seems, of judging the Chinese people by the American people. On the contrary, we must remember, first, the political ignorance and inexperience, and second the economic condition, of the great mass of the Chinese people. Ultimately, through education and experience and a more stable economic existence, the Chinese people may well become as capable of self-government—as able to determine what is politically and economically good for them—as our people are. But that certainly is far from being the case at the present time. At the present time over 90%—some authorities say 95%—of the Chinese people is completely illiterate! To suggest that these people are capable of determining whether or not they *want* Communism is to suggest that a two-year old child is capable of determining the validity of the Einstein Theory. At the present time, and for at least the last three decades, 95% of the people of China have been living so close to the border line of sheer starvation that merely to keep alive has required all of their energy, physical and mental. Thus they have had no opportunity, even if they had been capable through education and experience of so doing, to consider the question of Communism.

The People's Real Needs

Consequently it is not, at present and under present conditions, a matter of whether or not the Chinese people want or do not want Communism, but one of whether or not they are to have it forced upon them by a set of venal politicians who employ its methods and measures *not* in the attempted betterment of conditions for the masses, but solely as a means to gain and hold dictatorial and unbridled political power. What the Chinese people really want, and what they direly need, are the bare necessities of life—food, clothing, shelter and medical attention. These, if you have read Pearl Buck's classic, "The Good Earth," you will know they do not have—and cannot have until a stable, decent government frees them from the ravages of pillaging, murdering war lords whose civil wars in the past two decades have directly killed and starved at least 20 million men, women and children and indirectly exterminated at least twice that many more; besides robbing the survivors of all they possessed.

Read Hallett Abend's "Tortured China." Read J. O. P. Bland's "China, The Pity Of It." Read Rodney Gilbert's "What's Wrong With China." Read these books—by men who have no political or ideological axes to grind; who are not pro-Japanese in the slightest degree, and who are all filled with as much pity and compassion for the Chinese people as they are with indignation at the ruthless warlords and venal politicians who have so brutally oppressed, starved and maltreated these helpless and innocent and deserving people. Take the Chinese victims of the Sino-Japanese war; take the figures of these given by the Chinese authorities at their face value; take these and add them all together, and what will you have? A mere handful compared to the number of Chinese—men, women and children—who, during the past twenty years,

have been murdered or starved to death by what we have been pleased to call the Chinese "government."

Says Mr. W. B. Courtney in an article in Collier's Weekly of February 4, 1939:

"More damage was done to property in Canton and other cities by fires set by the Chinese themselves than by Japanese bombs. Four hundred civilians were killed in Changsha by a fire set by Chinese authorities. The American Church Mission Hospital was destroyed, together with about eighty per cent of the total number of houses in this Hunan Province Capital. More civilians, helpless peasants, were killed by the flood caused when the Chinese High Command had the Yangtze dikes breached than by Japanese air bombs in the entire war."

I make these statements not as an excuse, nor an apology, nor as a defense of anything Japan has done. As you know, I hold no brief for Japan; am not engaged in seeking to justify her actions. I make these statements to provide the *explanation* of what is now occurring in East Asia. I make them also to refute the propaganda with which this country has been deluged; propaganda which, through misrepresentation, half-truths, suppression and downright untruths, would make it appear that before the beginning of the Sino-Japanese conflict China was flowing with milk and honey, and the Chinese people were just one big, democratic family; at peace among themselves, prosperous and happy under a benign and benevolent government whose sole aim was to promote the people's welfare.

Chinese Officials Blameworthy

Death, whether by bombs or bullets or starvation or drowning or by a bandit's torture, is terrible; and it is dia-

bolically hypocritical to pretend that wholesale death was introduced into China by the Sino-Japanese conflict. All war is brutal. But there is one thing even more brutal—the *willingness of public officials to sacrifice the lives of innocent civilians in order to make effective propaganda*. And this, according to Mr. W. B. Courtney, writing in *Collier's* of February 4, high officials of the Chiang Kai-shek regime have frequently done. I quote from Mr. Courtney's article:

"After each raid on Hankow or Changsha, and similar places, the Chinese Propaganda Ministry would hand out statistics to the correspondents—600, or 800, or whatever the number 'innocent civilians' killed. We never suspected the innocence of the poor victims. We questioned that of the officials, whose eagerness in telling us how many civilians were killed was matched by their remissness in failing to tell those civilians how to avoid being killed.

"The marksmanship of Japanese bombing pilots was perhaps often at fault; but, within my personal observation, not their intentions. Canton and Hankow, for example, were very well-fortified cities, military headquarters, bristling with legitimate objectives. I have a map of Canton showing the areas in which destruction of non-military property, and deaths of civilians occurred. Each was in the near vicinity of a military objective: utility plants, a bridge, railroads. One American hospital, within a few hundred feet of important rail yards, had a small American flag painted on a terra-cotta roof; no pilot could have discerned this from 1000 feet. On every side were buildings used by the military. Lingnan University (Canton Christian College, Rockefeller-endowed) had a Chinese anti-aircraft gun on its campus until faculty pleas secured its removal.

“Japanese raids did enormous damage, caused thousands of non-combatant deaths. But those of us who looked on knew that most of those deaths were unnecessary. They were due to negligence of authorities, who did not instruct and drill their populations in how to protect themselves. If they had been warned to run, walk, or crawl away from the neighborhood of military objectives when raid signals were given, some would have been killed—but not ten per cent of the dreadful totals. I have seen hundreds of ignorant civilians sitting like sparrows alongside possible military objectives. Many were actually blown up in railroad depots, although they must have had half an hour’s leeway to clear out, if they had been instructed in the danger of their situation.”

And so, without condoning anything that has happened in the Sino-Japanese conflict, let us be honest enough and fair enough to admit that all the right is not on one side and all the wrong on the other.

Is this, in fact, ever the case? Personally, I have never known a controversy, small or large, of which it was true. Agreed that if it were true, things would be simplified tremendously. If we *could* always draw a broad black line and say “all on this side is good, all on the other side evil,” that would make decisions ever so easy. But we know that such can not be done; that wherever it has been tried it ultimately has had disastrous results—for individual man, and for mankind in general.

Militarist Control?

You ask how much, if any, truth there is in “the popular assertion that the Japanese people and government are absolutely controlled by the militarists.”

Again you open up a broad subject, and one which can hardly be intelligently discussed without a considerable

knowledge of Japanese history and culture; and without a realization of what *patriotism*—a word which I am afraid we often too lightly use—means to the Japanese people, from the most exalted official down to the humblest worker. Patriotism with the Japanese is much more akin to what the more pious of us still mean by religion. Indeed, one might say broadly that to the Japanese, patriotism is an integral part of their religion; a religion which is not something to be worn like an extra garment one day a week, but is an indissoluble and ever-present element in each man's being and therefore influences his every act, however seemingly trivial that act may be. I say "*seemingly trivial*," because in the Japanese religion there is nothing that is *really* trivial—each and every thing is a part in the one whole; and while some things, by their nature, are subordinate to others, all are essential, even indispensable. Thus, while the head may control the body, it would be helpless without the other members. And although the foot is a much less vital organ than the heart, it need feel no shame for this—if it were cut off the man would become a cripple and so cease to be a perfect whole. Consequently neither unrestrained Capitalism, because it may mean undue oppression of the lowly; nor Communism, because it seeks to destroy all classes but one, is acceptable to the Japanese. By the same token, militaristic dominance, though acquiesced in as a temporary necessity; an emergency measure, is equally unacceptable as an enduring proposition.

It is doubtless true that at the present time military men are of more influence in the Japanese government than business or professional men. This is no more than natural, considering that the nation is involved in a major military conflict, and is a condition that occurs in any country in war time. It was true here in America during the World War, as it was

of course in England and France. Therefore, while I do not elect to assume the role of prophet, I believe it is safe to say that once the emergency is over, the predominant influence of military men in Japan will subside and the business and professional man again will take his customary place and exercise his customary influence. Moreover, in the present circumstances, it is not that the military man has seized power by shoving out the business and professional man, but that the latter, believing the former to be better fitted for the unusual tasks at hand, has voluntarily drawn aside and invited the former to take the helm. Here again, in order to understand the situation, we must view it against the background of Japanese culture, and not against our own. Believing that the welfare of the great Japanese family, i.e., the Empire, is at stake, every member of the family feels that he must subordinate his personal preferences, and willingly and energetically and whole-heartedly perform the service for which, during the life of the crisis, he is most needed. Thus during the pendency of the emergency, business, industry and finance all subordinate what is ordinarily their primary object—profit—to the single purpose of serving the nation. But when the crisis has passed, human nature being what it is, there is every reason to believe that business, industry and finance once more will assume their regular roles in the life of the nation. At least that has always been the case heretofore, and it seems illogical to suggest that, in this respect, the future will be different than the past.

It may seem that I have gone rather far afield in these last few paragraphs, but it is impossible to answer such searching questions as yours without going into the background of Oriental history, religion, culture, customs, etc.

"Trade Door" Not Slammed

You ask, "Is it true that Japan has been slamming the trade door on us in the Orient; and if it is not, why do so many writers say so?"

I can answer the first half of your question with an unqualified No! The statistics compiled by our own Department of Commerce show conclusively that it is not true. The authenticity of these figures cannot be questioned. They are compiled by our own officials. I do not wish to burden this letter with figures, but if you want to confirm my statements, all you need to do is to get from the U. S. Department of Commerce Bulletin No. 839. There you will find the figures which substantiate my statements. These statements are further corroborated by Prof. Albert E. Hindmarsh of Harvard University in his book, "The Basis of Japanese Foreign Policy" (Harvard University Press). Says Professor Hindmarsh:

"Insistence by the United States on the Open Door policy has not resulted in any substantial realization of its original objectives so far as these have related to conserving and increasing our share of trade with China. On the contrary, our trade has increased steadily in that part of China which has been most directly under Japanese influence; the conservation of that trade has not required expensive protective devices which in other areas have more than absorbed the net value of the commerce involved. The Open Door policy seems to be an economic fallacy and an illusion which has led us to take a position vis-a-vis Japan quite out of keeping with our true interest in the Far East."

Ignorance and Propaganda

The other portion of your question is not so easy to answer. Why, you ask, if it is not true that Japan is slamming the trade door in our face, do so many writers say so?

Some of them probably do so through ignorance. They have heard the charge made, and repeat it without checking. In this day, when so much of what appears in print is written under pressure of a time limit, careful checking is increasingly difficult. Moreover, accuracy fights today a losing battle against sensationalism. Not so much what is accurate, but what will intrigue the interest of readers and therefore sell papers, or magazines, is more and more indistinguishable from the guiding policy of many publishers and editors. The duty of acting as an agency of enlightenment seems to rest ever more lightly upon the shoulders of modern journalism. Thus, a man whose ignorance would have been a serious if not fatal handicap a generation ago, finds it largely overlooked if he possesses the capacity to turn out sensational stuff. Not to inform, but to dazzle and dumfound is, unfortunately, the ambition and function of much of the press today.

Others of those who say Japan is slamming the trade door in our face are, I am afraid, guilty of something more than ignorance. Wanting to stir up American distrust and dislike of Japan, they write what they believe will accomplish this, and seldom allow themselves to be handicapped by the facts. They well know that such assertions are not libellous and therefore cannot bring them to book. Moreover, if anyone should back them into a corner and demand proofs, they can always extricate themselves by citing the case of so and so who was selling sewing machines to the women of Manchuria and who, since the birth of Manchoukuo, has been "forced out."

Frequently such minor incidents—which unquestionably do occur—are the basis for long articles that atone for the lack of any proofs or substantiating figures by an abundance of wrath-provoking and prejudice-creating assertions which, to

the uninformed, are entirely plausible and are therefore swallowed whole and no questions asked.

There are, as I have said, instances in which individual American agents, because of changes instituted by the Japanese, have found it impractical or unprofitable to continue their activities in certain parts of the Orient. Such a man visited me within the month. He was, he stated, connected with an American firm which did considerable business in Korea and Manchoukuo. For some twenty years he had travelled those regions for his firm, and, with his family, had maintained a home out there. Three years ago, he said, due to changes brought about by the Japanese in the methods of doing business, his services were no longer needed there and so he came back to America. "I hated to leave," he said. "Life was easy out there—servants were cheap, vacations frequent, and I liked that country. But I am frank to admit that my firm has saved on expenses as a result of the change and—sold three times as much goods out there as before."

This man's experience has no doubt been shared by others—how many we do not know; but apparently most of them have not taken as impersonal a view of the situation as he did. Most of them have been displeased at having to give up the "easy life," and, as was perfectly human and natural, made a fuss about it. And, so far as I can ascertain, it has been such incidents and the fuss made by their victims which has furnished most of the basis for most of the sensational articles asserting that the Japanese have slammed the trade door in America's face. True, some individual Americans have been disadvantaged and they would not be human if they did not complain. But it is likewise true—and this is by far the more important thing—that the total business American firms have done with the region in which these individuals were dislocated has gone on increasing year by year.

Coming back to the writers—you can realize that it makes a “good feature story” to tell about so and so many Americans, in business in certain sections of the Orient for many years, having been “forced out.” It would “spoil” that story to add that, at the same time, American business in those areas has substantially increased. And you can hardly expect a feature writer to “spoil” a good story.

More Red Propaganda

Still referring to the writers of the articles to which you allude, I believe it is true that some of these men are so imbued with the desirability of Communism as to embrace the Communist tenet that the end justifies the means. These people will thus say or write anything which they believe will advance Communism and disadvantage its opponents. Knowing that Americans have been educated to think that trade with China is a very important item, they believe that by iterating and reiterating that Japan is cutting off this trade, they will antagonize Americans against Communism’s only formidable opponent in the Orient—Japan.

This may sound far-fetched, but if you will read the history of the Communist International you will learn of even more absurd lengths to which the Communists have gone in their zeal to advance their programme. Remember how consistently and vehemently they denigrated and denounced democracy up to a certain day and hour in 1935; and how, since that moment, they have glorified and defended it with parrot-like repetition. Witness the modern miracle wherein a few incantations at a confab in Moscow turned Communism into “20th century democracy”; witness that, and thereafter you will be amazed at nothing in the life and adventures of Communism.

China's Own Efforts Fail

You suggest that "China, left to her own devices, might have been able to work herself out of her manifold difficulties."

This, of course, is a question about which we could argue endlessly without, as the saying goes, "getting any forrader." It is just possible that, if the British would get out, bag and baggage, the people of India might work out *their* own destiny. There is always room for something to be said in behalf of the man who believes in letting nature take its course and therefore in refusing to see a doctor. But there is likewise something—in fact a good deal—to be said in behalf of intervention by outside agencies when, after years of fruitless effort, a people seems unable to establish the first requisite of organized society—law and order.

Since the downfall of the Monarchy in 1911, China has been going from bad to worse. The disintegration had started, of course, long before the Monarchy collapsed; rooted in that corruption which breeds, besides bad government, all sorts of collective and individual ills.

It was this corruption which signed the Monarchy's death warrant; and it was because of the decadence parented by this corruption that China has been unable since to produce a *capable leader who would place the welfare of the Chinese people above his own personal ambitions and advantage*. Thus the endless years of brutal civil wars in which venal warlords pitted against one another, each seeking not the nation's good but his own gain, ravaged and pillaged the entire country and, with a callous indifference unparalleled in the world's history, murdered and starved millions upon millions of innocent and defenseless Chinese men, women and children.

This is the "Tortured China" that Hallett Abend has so graphically described in his book of that name. This is the wracked and ravaged China which inspired J. O. P. Bland to

pour out his compassion for the Chinese people and his disgust for the Chinese politicians in his "China: The Pity Of It." This is the impoverished, starving China of which Pearl Buck wrote so vividly and sympathetically in her "The Good Earth."

Famines, floods, pestilences, and then—worse than all these together—the ravaging, pillaging, decimating civil wars! A people less inured to incredible hardship and suffering would have perished utterly. A people less tenacious of life would have been obliterated absolutely.

Dr. Sun Asks Outside Aid

It is reported, on evidence sufficiently valid to persuade the British-owned magazine, "Oriental Affairs," to give it currency, that the late Dr. Sun Yat-sen, himself the principal leader of the Revolution, in the evening of his life, so despaired of his countrymen ever resolving their bloody feuds and establishing order and a stable government through their own efforts, as to have voiced this despair in a long letter to a high-placed Japanese statesman of the time, to whom he also advanced the suggestion of the Japanese Government instituting some kind of protectorate over China until such time as the Chinese could manifest the capacity to govern themselves.

The fact that such a letter was written and sent seems well established; indeed, the text of it has been printed in reliable publications. Not so well established, but nonetheless apparently accurate, is the report that this act of Dr. Sun's was the afterpiece in a series of negotiations in which he had futilely sought some such form of intervention from first, Great Britain, and then the U. S. A.

A little later this man, who, probably more than any other, and with the most idealistic intent, had created the Frankenstein which he now saw wreaking such monstrous

destruction, closed his tired eyes upon a land rent with internal feuds and drenched with fraternal blood, and gave up the ghost.

"The evil that men do lives after them," said Shakespeare, "the good is oft interr'd in their bones."

The evil that Dr. Sun Yat-sen did in China certainly has lived after him. It was not, let me hasten to say, deliberate evil. At the time he did it he unquestionably believed, with all the fervor of his being, that to invite Communism to China was for China's good; though later (when his mistake was gravely apparent) he *did* say, according to report, that he was "forced into the arms of the Soviet by the indifference of Great Britain and America."

Whether this was really the case, or was simply the kind of rationalizing a politician engages in to excuse a mistake, there is small doubt that in the twilight of his career Dr. Sun realized that it had been a mistake of serious moment. For he saw that Communism in China had made bad matters worse—not only were the sanguinary and devastating feuds between rival warlords exacerbated by the Communist incursion, but it provoked and perpetuated new feuds and new campaigns of decimation and destruction.

Whether China, unplagued by the Communist locusts, might, in our time, have worked out its own salvation with the most of its people still alive, remains doubtful. With the new strife which Communism's invasion engendered, this possibility was quickly foreclosed. For Communism, as you must know from having witnessed its operation in Spain and elsewhere, thrives on turmoil and batters on chaos. Hence, if these are lacking when it arrives, it speedily creates them. In 1931, Hallett Abend wrote (in "Tortured China"): "Communism is in China to conquer—or to die. And whatever the outcome of the struggle, the Chinese people, it seems,

must suffer from the inevitable conflict. The Chinese brand of Communism is in China to stay, or be exterminated with the accompaniment of a ghastly blood-letting . . .”

Several months ago, the United Press carried a dispatch from Shanghai, reading in part as follows:

“The former Chinese Communist Party, gaining an increasingly strong position in Chiang Kai-shek’s Popular Front Government, probably would be able to prevent mediation of the undeclared Chinese-Japanese War, leading diplomats told the United Press today. Commenting on dispatches from London stating that Britain may attempt a mediation effort once her program of European pacification is under way, the diplomats described the present outlook for an armistice as ‘hopeless’ because of:

“Determination of Chinese Communist leaders to continue the struggle indefinitely *no matter what the cost to China*. Veteran reds are willing to see China bled white because they think their former political enemies, including Chiang, will be the chief sufferers and that eventually a *real Communist State can be erected* once the ‘capitalists’ and ‘bourgeoisie’ have been liquidated by the Japanese.”

Thus it appears that Hallett Abend’s predictions were all too accurate—those whom Dr. Sun, in all good faith, invited in to aid the Chinese Republic came and remained (as more recently in Spain) to undermine and destroy it; and this with an utter disregard of the sufferings of the Chinese people.

In the last analysis, “what might have been” must always remain locked within the realm of speculation. Consequently no one can say positively that if the virus of Communism had not been introduced into China, the Chinese people would have been able to work out their own salvation without foreign intervention. My own opinion, offered for what it is worth, is that at one time they might have been. The general

popular acclaim that met the rise to power of Wu Pei-fu, who was that rare *avis* in China: a scholar, a successful warlord and an honest man, seemed to presage that national unity necessary to sustain orderly government, and which had been sadly lacking in China until then. Whether Wu Pei-fu could have maintained this unity and have held the country together under his rule, we cannot say. But it is not without considerable significance that his final defeat and overthrow was largely brought about by none other than the then Communist-directed and supported Chiang Kai-shek. This may have been only a coincidence, but it smacks more of being a part of the Moscow programme.

No Democracy In China

You wish to know what basis there is for calling the Chinese Government, i.e., the Chiang Kai-shek regime, democratic.

Unfortunately, the words "democracy" and "democratic" have recently been so extensively and violently mis-used and misapplied that they have come to be almost meaningless. When we are asked to include within the necessarily limited boundaries of democracy the brutal autocracy of Soviet Russia; the cold and calculating imperialism of the British and French empires; and the vertiginous machinations of the tinpot dictatorships of Latin America, wherein hardly a single reigning ruler but got power by violence, the whole thing becomes absurd. One might as well put a rattlesnake, a lion, a tiger, a skunk and a coyote into a pen together and invite the public to "come and see the nice camel."

Confining the words "democracy" and "democratic" to what they have always meant before being tortured out of their true significance, and to what they *actually* mean now to sane minds, it can be said unqualifiedly that there is not

now and never has been any basis whatsoever for calling China, or the various regimes at one time or another recognized as the governments of China, democratic. No man has ever got or held responsible political place in China as the result of an election; indeed no election, in the sense that we use the word, has ever been held. In the early days of the "Republic" there was for an interval what was euphemistically termed a "parliament." But its members were not chosen by vote of the people, and it was merely a powerless, rubber-stamp body which soon went out of existence and never has been revived.

The trick of calling China a democracy was contrived by the same people who invented the comic fiction that Soviet Russia is a democracy, and who parented and promulgated the deception that "Loyalist" Spain was a democracy—our old friends, the Communists. Realizing that to the average American the word democracy naturally evoked a favourable conception, the Communists felt that calling China a democracy would automatically prejudice Americans in its favour and against Japan. They were right. Today the average American who condemns Japan without a hearing, does so mainly because he believes Japan is attacking democracy in China. Called upon to defend his position, he may conjure up other reasons for his attitude, but these are collateral things; down deep his unfavourable reaction is linked with his belief—created by false propaganda—that China is a democracy, fighting to maintain the democratic system.

The same thing happened, of course, in respect of the so-called "Loyalist" faction in Spain. By adroitly making Americans believe that this faction was fighting for democracy, the Communists gained for it the sympathy and support of millions of well-intentioned Americans, who never would have proffered either had they known what ultimately came

out—that the so-called loyalists were controlled bag and baggage by the Communists who had swarmed in, as our former ambassador to Spain, Irwin Laughlin, declared, “not to aid the Spanish Republic but to destroy it.”

If that vast army of Americans who have been deluded into believing that China is a democracy, could have known that this was a monumental and vicious deception, perpetrated by the Communists and their sympathizers in order to advance Communism in China, they would have taken an altogether different attitude toward the Sino-Japanese controversy. Now that their betrayal has been exposed, their antagonism toward Japan is abating; which is undoubtedly why the anti-Japanese boycott is gradually petering out. The Communists are still agitating for it, of course. But the non-Communists who for a time were deluded into furthering it, have withdrawn their support.

Incidentally, it seems worthy to be remarked that the people who have been assuring us that Chiang Kai-shek is a splendid democrat, and his regime a democracy, are the self-same people who up to Chiang's kidnapping in December, 1936, were berating him as a “Fascist” and denouncing his government as a “Fascist Dictatorship.” Only after he had bailed himself out of captivity, by joining with the Communists in their fight on Japan, did he suddenly cease to be a brutal fascist and become a benevolent democratic ruler. No miracle was ever more miraculous than the transformation that takes place when an important non-Communist joins the Communists or accepts their programme. I might add that there is one infallible test, from the Communist standpoint, for determining whether or not a nation is democratic. If it is on the side of Soviet Russia, it is. If not, it isn't. Nothing could be simpler.

Finally, before passing from this subject, let me repeat a

statement of Hugh Byas, one of the leading Far Eastern correspondents of the New York Times, as quoted in a book by Henry W. Taft, brother of the late President and Chief Justice. Says Mr. Byas:

"China has for two generations been the special field of American missionary and philanthropic activities. There are about five thousand American missionaries in China, of whom one thousand are in the United States each year spending a well-earned quinquennial holiday and making speeches throughout the country in the interests of their missions. The missionaries naturally sympathize with the 'Young China' movement, for many of its leaders have been educated in mission schools and have practiced their English in the cheerful surroundings of the Y. M. C. A. The missionaries are profoundly sympathetic with the republican ideals which come so glibly to the lips of their young converts, and are little accustomed to the objective measurement of political forces. It is largely due to the well-intentioned but uncritical propaganda of American missionaries that a picture has been created in the minds of the American people of China as an awakening democracy and Japan as an imperialistic power which aims at controlling and exploiting China and so securing the mastery of the Pacific."

For a very full and authentic answer to your inquiry concerning American investments in the Far East, I must refer you to a book called "Foreign Investments in China," by C. F. Remer (Macmillan).

All of the questions you raise are answered in this book, and I am sure you will find it very interesting. Your book dealer undoubtedly has it in stock or can quickly get it for you; or you can obtain it in any good public library.

Suffice it therefore for me to say that the common beliefs that (1) American investments in China are huge; and (2)

that trade with China is, actually or potentially, a big bonanza for America, are both entirely fallacious. According to Professor Remer's statement our total commercial investments in China are approximately \$196,824,000, as against \$1,189,200,000 for Great Britain. Our trade with China has never come anywhere near the totals that have been used in the tremendous and unwarranted ballyhoo about it. It represents somewhere between ten and twelve per cent of our total trade with the Orient as against 45 per cent for our trade with Japan. The fact is that despite all the ballyhoo, our trade with China has never been a profitable thing—certainly not in recent years. Not only are China's purchases from us considerably less than ours from her (she bought less than half as much from us in 1937 as we bought from her), but when we include the expenses of our military establishment in China, our loss is even more than the trade figures show.

As for America and Japan, theirs is by far the largest trade between any two countries on the Pacific, and, excepting only that between the U. S. A. and Great Britain and Canada, is the largest international trade in the world. Moreover, our trade with Japan has always been profitable. Japan is good pay, so that we neither have to write off losses for repudiated or defaulted debts, nor suffer the expense of maintaining armed forces to insure collecting what is due us.

In concluding, let me reiterate what I have said so often that it is, I fear, in danger of being considered hackneyed—that we must *get the facts*. Without them it is never possible to act intelligently or to reach valid conclusions. And we must be sure that we get the facts—and not something dressed in their clothes and masquerading as them.

Getting the facts is frequently no simple, easy task. The road leading to them, which once was honestly marked and fairly straight, is now intersected by all sorts of crossroads,

deceptively marked and leading into swamps of misinformation and wildernesses of distortion.

One of the most effective enemies of democracy is false propaganda. Again and again we have seen instances in which the people, fully and accurately advised of a given situation, sized it up soundly and acted upon it wisely. I am one of those who is not afraid to submit any reasonable question to the arbitrament of the people, provided their full and accurate information upon it is assured; provided they can be permitted to consider and act upon it free from the poisonous influence of misinformation, distortion and mendacity.

This is a big proviso. Unfortunately, in many instances, the people get, instead of complete and accurate information, a barrage of half-truths and distortions, dressed up in an alluring emotional appeal. And thus deceived and disadvantaged, they *cannot* decide wisely. Their judgment is poisoned at the source. That, I am sorry to say, is exactly what has happened to the judgment of many Americans in respect of the unfortunate Sino-Japanese conflict.

I sincerely hope this letter has thrown some light upon the questions you raised, without having transgressed too much upon your time. And may I beg this of you—please do not think that I am setting myself up as the final authority on all things Far Eastern. Lafcadio Hearn, after spending a quarter of a century there, wrote what he called “an attempt at an interpretation.” It is a tremendous field; its currents and cross-currents are deep and manifold; its problems numerous and complex. To keep up with them and comprehend them is a continuous and lifetime study.

Yours very truly,

DAVID WARREN RYDER

D.W.R.:A.R.

What To Read

FOREIGN INVESTMENTS IN CHINA, by C. F. Remer, Professor of Economics in the University of Michigan; Macmillan (New York).

This is a book of some 700 pages, with an excellent bibliography and index, devoted to a detailed, comprehensive and most interesting compilation and analysis of foreign investments in China.

Part one, which constitutes roughly one-third of the volume, deals with the more general aspects of the subject—China's Population and Resources; Traditional China; Modern Economic Relations; A General Picture of Foreign Investments in China; The Significance of Business Investments; Foreign Obligations of the Chinese Government; Remittances from Chinese Overseas; Trade and Specie Movements, etc., etc. The remainder of the book provides individual studies of American, British, Japanese, Russian, French, German, and Belgian, Dutch, Italian and Scandinavian investments in China.

The chapter on American investments runs to 100 pages, and besides being the most reliable, is undoubtedly the most exhaustive and complete study ever made of this subject. Incidentally, America's total business investment in China is given as \$196,824,124, as against \$1,189,200,000 for Great Britain. Thus Britain's commercial stake in China is almost eleven times that of America.

NEUTRALITY FOR THE UNITED STATES, by Edwin Borchard, Professor of International Law at Yale University, and William P. Lage; Yale University Press (New Haven).

"Those who are trying to find out what neutrality really is," says Dr. Charles A. Beard, "will have to read this volume." Another commentator has said: "This is one of the most astute, intelligent and devastating books, we believe, that has been written on the subject of how America got into one war, and, what is more important, how it can escape entanglement in the next. It goes over little or none of the ground covered by previous books like Walter Millis' *Road To War*, and it marshals the evidence not against the professional war-makers, but against the unneutral officials in high places, who, from the begin-

ning of the War until we entered it, pursued a course that was certain to involve this country as a belligerent. . . . The authors believe that Americans should learn more about these things, that they should learn to distinguish between the propaganda and temptations that would again lead America to fight foreign wars for supposedly 'righteous' causes, and the perfectly clear road of our own selfinterest, which is happily both peaceful and undisturbed."

Epitomizing what may be termed the essential theme of the book, the authors, in their preface, say:

"Neutrality is necessarily incompatible with the new theory that peace can be produced by coalitions of the worthy 'peace-loving' nations against an 'aggressor.' This revolutionary idea has no roots in experience, is antilegal in its connotations, and has naturally produced, together with the 'peace' treaties with which it was born, a state of international disequilibrium and distemper unparalleled in modern times. Not least of its deplorable features is the fact that it has enlisted in its support the emotional morality of so-called idealists, particularly in the United States. Far removed from the turmoil which characterizes Europe, these groups have cherished and expounded the theory and persuaded governments to support it as the way to peace. Non-intervention has been denounced as immoral. Partiality and intervention have been glorified. No wonder then that armaments have steadily increased and wars appear imminent. The result of these unfortunate contradictions has been to extol force and war in the name of peace, to characterize neutrality as an invitation to war, and sanctions and intervention as peaceful devices, to consider the neutrals as reactionaries and the Noble Interventionists as liberals. A topsy-turvy world of paradoxes has thus been created in which peace is to be achieved through war."

And they conclude the book by stating:

"There is no improvised formula to insure abstention from war and yet maintain national dignity. Neither the taking of sides nor widespread embargoes marks the road to peace. Far more important are an honest intention to remain aloof from foreign conflict, a refusal to be stampeded by unneutral propaganda, a knowledge of the law and a capacity to stand upon it, meeting emergencies and problems not romantically but wisely. The cultivation of sagacity in these matters, of detachment, of moderation, of toleration, of the spirit of live and let live, and the renunciation of the psychology and policy of 'enforcing peace' by hostile measures probably present the only tangible hope for preserving peace in broad areas of the world."

SUGGESTED READING

- THE BASIS OF JAPANESE FOREIGN POLICY, by *Albert E. Hindmarsh* (Harvard Univ. Press)
- FAR EASTERN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, by *Hosea Ballou Morse and Harley Farnsworth MacNair* (Houghton, Mifflin Co.)
- CHINA: THE PITY OF IT, by *J. O. P. Bland* (Heinemann; London)
- WHAT'S WRONG WITH CHINA, by *Rodney Gilbert* (Murray)
- WITHIN THE WALLS OF NANKING, by *Mrs. A. T. Hobart* (Cape; London)
- TORTURED CHINA, by *Hallett Abend* (Ives Washburn)
- WAYS THAT ARE DARK—The Truth About China,
and
- ASIA ANSWERS; both by *Ralph Townsend* (G. P. Putnam's Sons)
- THE FAR EAST, by *Payson J. Treat* (Stanford Univ. Press)
- THE CHINESE: THEIR HISTORY AND CULTURE, by *Kenneth Scott Latourette* (The Macmillan Co., New York)
- WHY MEDDLE IN THE ORIENT? by *Boake Carter and Thomas H. Healy* (Dodge Publishing Co., New York)

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- FAR EAST FUNDAMENTALS—September, 1938
- MANCHURIA—PAST AND PRESENT—October, 1938
- SOME JAPANESE GHOSTS—November-December, 1938
- WHAT'S WHAT IN CHINA?—January, 1939
- WHAT IS CHINA?—February, 1939.

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